



**Dr. Jack Smith**, Calvert County's Superintendent of Schools, is a champion of high-quality career and technology education programs. In 2007, Dr. Smith began a careful review of the CTE programs offered in Calvert County with an eye toward ensuring that they were responsive to the economic and workforce development needs not only of the county, but of the state and nation. Subsequently, he actively pursued the introduction of the Gateway to Technology pre-engineering curriculum for middle school students and introduced the Project Lead the Way Engineering program for high school students.

Dr. Smith also reviewed the Maryland CTE Programs of Study and called for the school system to more closely align its programs with those developed by the Maryland State Department of Education. To achieve these goals, Dr. Smith personally participated in the Citi Schools That Work Institute co-sponsored by the Maryland State Department of Education. The professional development offered at the Institute began with a team of central office staff members, but then involved teachers, counselors, administrators, and business advisory council members and postsecondary partners in follow-up strategic planning sessions. By engaging a wide group of stakeholders and partners from across the state and in Calvert County, Dr. Smith's efforts are ensuring that Calvert County's CTE programs are preparing all students for successful transition from high school to college and careers.

The change process was facilitated by the high-level leadership exhibited by Dr. Smith. He not only charged his staff to explore ways to improve the CTE program, he worked side-by-side with them to demonstrate his support and encouragement for risk taking. He carefully reviewed local data and employed data-driven decision-making to identify local CTE program strengths and opportunities for improvement. His visionary leadership, requiring staff to look for "outside of the box" solutions, enabled staff to blend a variety of resources such as State STEM Grants, Federal Perkins Reserve Fund Grants, and Bridge to Excellence funding to create a systemic approach for the improvement of CTE programming.

Throughout the process, Dr. Smith has been very effective in collaborating with members of local business and industry, representatives from two- and four-year colleges, local government, and other stakeholders to fully implement plans to keep Calvert County's CTE programs in the forefront. Today, thanks in large part to Dr. Smith's leadership, CTE is a central component to the school district's educational reform initiatives. The school district's Master Plan and system-wide goals include a focus on updating CTE programs and an expansion of high-quality CTE programs at both the technical center and all four comprehensive high schools.